

Economics Seminar ECO 799

2019 Spring

Time: W 6:00PM - 8:00PM

Instructor: Dr. Christian Parenti

Office Hours: 2pm to 3pm M/W or by appointment

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Course Description:

This course is structured as writing workshop. There will be no reading, or almost no reading. All the work is focused completing a capstone research paper of at least 25 pages. Each class meeting will involve student presentations of their work. In every class meeting, progress toward a completed paper is the goal.

Course Objectives

- To explore the process of scholarly research and writing.
- To understand the link between writing and thinking.
- To understand the role of evidence in rational argumentation.

Learning Outcomes

- To demonstrate the ability to construct a clearly written argument.
- To apply properly evaluated and sourced evidence in support of that argument.
- Demonstrate the ability to rationally evaluate sources for their veracity and utility.

Other Student Learning Goals and Objectives

- 1. Essential interpretive literacy across a wide variety of disciplines, genres, and media.**
 - a. Ask critical questions

- b. Find unstated assumptions in the text/work
 - c. Assess arguments
 - d. Offer original interpretations of primary works
 - e. Identify and integrate knowledge, methods, or conventions of different fields of study
 - f. Engage in an effective comparative study of the primary works of philosophy, history, politics, and religion
- 2. The ability to communicate effectively in a number of genres and modes, including, but not limited to, common forms of academic writing in the disciplines.**
- a. Attend to apply correct language usage and the conventions of academic writing and reference, including the use of appropriate discipline-specific terms and concepts
 - b. Synthesize material and articulate ideas clearly, in essays of increasing depth and complexity
 - c. Use writing as a means to develop critical thinking and frame problems in comparative and historical contexts in the personal essay, analytical essays, and longer research papers
 - d. Produce lab reports, essay exams, response papers, and experimental forms of writing, including group projects and multimedia formats
 - e. Orally present extended written work to examining faculty
 - f. Communicate and defend their ideas in class discussions, oral presentations, or other collaborative exercises
- 3. The capacity to set and pursue a sophisticated intellectual agenda and to engage in independent inquiry.**
- a. Connect the global cultural heritage with the issues and questions they face in their own lives as the foundation for active citizenship and lifelong learning
 - b. Mastery of the means for conducting both primary and secondary research
 - c. Independently craft the topic for a graduated series of extended essays or other intellectual projects
 - d. Produce an annotated bibliography and an abstract of an extended essay's argument
 - e. Develop meaningful, detailed educational plans that fit individual life goals
 - f. Direct their own intellectual lives through exploring immediate academic interests and long-term goals, improving learning strategies, participating in programs outside the classroom, and exploring career opportunities
 - g. Articulate and pursue personal, educational and career goals congruent with personal values and realistic self-appraisal
 - h. Take advantage of appropriate university resources that facilitate achieving intellectual, personal and professional fulfillment
 - i. Generalize academic experiences with respect to career development and/or graduate studies

Course Requirements and means of evaluation:

The course requirements are comprised of: participation in class discussions and a final research paper.

Grading

Your grade will be calculated as follows:

Class participation composes one third of your final grade; the final paper is two thirds of your final grade.

In-class participation means: consistent attendance and regular, thoughtful, informed participation in discussions. Thus, it is not sufficient to simply “show up.” Discussion in this class is mandatory – even for people who are shy. (Try not be shy, life is too short!)

Remember, we are all in this together and it is incumbent on all of us to foster a group dynamic that allows everyone to learn and participate. Thus, manners and courtesy – crucial parts of professionalism – are expected and considered in calculating your class participation grade.

Two absences are allowed, but any absence above that knocks your final grade down by one-third, for example from A to an A-, or C+ to a C.

It is useful to think of letter grades in the following way: an “A” represents truly outstanding work that exemplifies thorough analysis, superior insight, and crystal clear presentation. A “B” signifies highly competent work that accomplishes the task at hand very well, through considerable thought, reasonable analysis, and an organized presentation. A “C” represents adequate work that meets basic requirements but demonstrates no distinction in terms of analytical insight or organization. A “D” is characterized by poorly or partially completed work that reflects a lack of initiative, inconsistent analysis, and/or erratic presentation. Plus and minus indicate relatively better or poorer work within each category. There is no A+.

A note on writing: When writing a paper, each paragraph of an essay –whether long or short— should have a topic sentence that lays out the main idea of the paragraph at the beginning, because organization and clarity are essential to the writing process. Although outlines will not be required, students are encouraged to write them, outlining the main idea in the introduction and restating it in the conclusion.

Essays without thematic ideas or arguments—those that lapse into mere narration or description, or whose arguments are buried within the text—will be graded in accordance with their low level of organization. The goal of each essay is to develop one

or two general points, and to illustrate and substantiate them with examples from the assigned and recommended readings as well as supplemental research.

The point of an essay is to persuade your readers that you have found an exact fit between your argument and the evidence used to substantiate it. Remember: an essay is only as convincing as its arguments and evidence, and the tighter the fit between them, the more convincing the essay.

Plagiarism: It is imperative that you do not plagiarize when you write. Plagiarism is defined as follows: “The practice of taking someone else’s work or ideas and passing them off as one’s own.” Plagiarism can range from copying text to me really taking important ideas and using them without citing for referencing in any way their original source. To intentionally plagiarize can have extremely serious consequences on one’s education and later career. In the age of the Internet, when cutting and pasting text is a common practice while doing on-line research, plagiarism can happen inadvertently, by mistake. That does not lessen the seriousness of the problem. Even when committed innocently, in error, plagiarism is totally unacceptable and has major consequences.

As a student it is your responsibility to police your work to make sure you do not commit plagiarism.

Ethics. Please refer to the John Jay Student handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment and the academic appeals process.

Reading List

Class 1 Introductions and Overview

Class 2 Abstracts

Class 3 Outlines

Class 4 Individual meetings

Class 5 Rough draft of your first 4 pages due

Class 6 Student presentations of chapter one, part 1

Class 7 Student presentations of Chapter one, part 2

Class 8 Individual meetings

Class 9 Individual meetings

Class 10 Student presentations of chapter 2, Part 1

Class 11 Student presentations of chapter 2, Part 2

Class 12 TBA

Class 13 TBA

Class 14 Final presentation and defense group 1

Class 15 Final presentation and defense group 2